

VZCZCXRO1631
PP RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHAR #0144/01 0550745
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 240745Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8899
INFO RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA 0065
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC 0735
RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ACCRA 000144

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR S/CIEA
DEPARTMENT FOR ISN/MNSA
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY FOR OFFICE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY ED MCGINNIS, GRAIG
WELLING, ELIZABETH LISANN
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR SARAH LOPP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ENRG](#) [PARM](#) [IAEA](#) [PREL](#) [NPT](#) [GH](#)

SUBJECT: GHANA SUPPORTS U.S. PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, SEEKS
"PROMISED LAND" OF ENERGY SECURITY

REF: A) 09 STATE 129517 B) 09 ACCRA 01612

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: In response to reftel A demarche, the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission offered "political support" for the USG in the upcoming NPT Review Conference. Ghana embraces the future use of nuclear power for its energy security, medicine, and other peaceful uses. Although Ghana has stated it will ratify the CBTB Treaty and the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, and nuclear disarmament, the GOG does not want the disarmament issue to detract from the promotion of nuclear technology's peaceful applications. The Director General invited S/CIEA David Goldwyn to speak on nuclear power and energy security in Ghana and pledged to work with the Energy Commission to support the GNEP Steering Group meeting to be held in Accra on April 21-22. END SUMMARY.

GHANA TO SUPPORT USG IN NPT

12. (SBU) In response to reftel demarche, Director General Dr. Edward Akaho of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC) told Econoffs that Ghana would provide the U.S. with "political support" during the upcoming Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) quinquennial Review Conference and reiterated the GAEC's role as the main advocate for all nuclear applications in Ghana.

GHANA: GO NUKES

13. (SBU) Citing Ghana's need for a stable electricity supply for industrial development, Akaho said the GOG had "no choice" but to embrace nuclear power generation as a long-term future goal, as long as "it is done right." Akaho pledged that through the IAEA, NPT, and GNEP, Ghana would signal its clear intentions for peaceful, civilian nuclear energy use in order to gain international acceptance and trust, and for Ghana to reach the "promised land of energy security."

14. (SBU) Akaho expressed pride in Ghana's role as a trainer for other African countries in radiotherapy, and as a role model in safety and security of nuclear materials and facilities. He hoped that construction of the IAEA Security Support Center in Ghana would be completed by June 2010 in order to increase Ghana's ability to conduct training on the continent. He said the IAEA was helping the GOG to set up a functioning independent Nuclear Regulatory Authority, although he gave no date for its finalization. He applauded USG support for Ghana's waste management and storage programs. He added that GOG funding would eventually become available to establish a nuclear imaging and medical center on the GAEC's bucolic 40-acre campus next to the University of Ghana, and

that the Commission has already reached out to a medical technology park in Chicago to partner with the GAEC, in order to provide early detection of cancer and cardiovascular afflictions common in Ghana.

DISARMAMENT GOOD, PEACEFUL NUKES BETTER

¶5. (SBU) Akaho also related that the GOG took the NPT seriously. Nuclear disarmament is important to the GOG, and was a focus of the last NPT Review Conference. He mentioned interest in ratifying the CBTB Treaty, and informed Econoffs that the African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) currently was being reviewed by Cabinet prior to parliamentary ratification. Akaho stated that it was a concern that nuclear weapon holding states were not reducing their nuclear arsenals, but more important to Ghana is the promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

S/CIEA AND GNEP STEERING GROUP: YOU ARE WELCOME

¶6. (U) Working with the Ghana Nuclear Society, an advocacy group, and the IAEA, the GAEC hosts occasional meetings of international nuclear experts for talks in Ghana. Akaho expressed interest in S/CIEA David Goldwyn visiting Ghana to talk about nuclear power and energy security in 2010.

¶7. (U) In response to Department of Energy Office of Nuclear Energy Team Leader Elizabeth Lisann's site visit in preparation for Ghana's hosting of the April 21-22 Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) Steering Group Meeting in Accra, Dr. Akaho said that together with the Energy Commission and Ministry of Energy, the GAEC embraced the

ACCRA 00000144 002 OF 002

pivotal opportunity to bring GNEP to Ghana to discuss important changes to the name and focus of the Partnership.

IS NUCLEAR POWER REALLY FEASIBLE IN GHANA?

¶8. (SBU) COMMENT: GAEC's goal of someday achieving 40 percent of electricity supply from nuclear power, about double the current U.S. rate, does not appear feasible any time soon (reftel B). But the GAEC, having persevered through everything from indifference to open hostility from civilian and military rulers since establishment in 1963, is used to adversity and distant goal-setting. Nonetheless, given the GOG's current budgetary woes and IMF program, government funding for GAEC projects remains a pie-in-the-sky scenario for the foreseeable future.

¶9. (SBU) COMMENT, CONTINUED. Despite a lack of concrete funding for nuclear applications, and higher energy priorities centered around oil and gas exploration under the Mills Administration, and large technical hurdles to actually commencing a civilian nuclear energy program, Ghana's nuclear experts have their hearts in the right place, are role models in West Africa, and are reliably supportive of USG policies and goals related to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Ghana rightfully remains focused on practical measures that will build support for Ghana's development of a civilian nuclear power program: the medical, agricultural, and industrial uses of nuclear science. The GOG works closely with the U.S. in GNEP, and is frequently supportive of the USG in the IAEA and the NPT Review Conference. END COMMENT.

TEITELBAUM